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**MOVING TOGETHER IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM:
FOSTERING DIVERSITY, FORGING CONSISTENCY
ARE THE ANSWERS, BUT WHAT WAS THE QUESTION?**

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MOVING TOGETHER IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM: FOSTERING DIVERSITY, FORGING CONSISTENCY ARE THE ANSWERS, BUT WHAT WAS THE QUESTION?

Introduction

The Rector and Vice-chancellor, Vice Rectors, the Deans of Faculties, Directors of Schools, Distinguished guests, Colleagues, Students and all well wishers. I am here today by the grace of God to contribute towards a better understanding of the issue of moving together in the new millennium: fostering diversity, forging consistency in Africa, in keeping with the custom of induction or initiation into a professorial chair in a university. But tonight is special - because we stand on the mountaintop of a new millennium. Behind us we see the great achievement of this great university; before us, even grander frontiers of possibility.

It is with gratitude to "God and to the authorities of this great university that I accept the special honour and privilege of giving this millennium's first inaugural speech. It is a leap year and a new century and since in Greek and Yoruba mythologies, leap years are regarded as periods of extraordinary productivity, one is particularly glad to be selected to set the tone for the rest of the year which we all hope and pray will be most productive for all and sundry.

The sum-total of my argument is that the spirit of diversity could help us drive multi-racial unity in our continent. "The establishment of unity between the black and the white will be the assurance of world peace. The beauty and harmony is reflected in the diversity of humanity and the development of a moral environment. The various races of humankind lend a composite harmony and beauty of colour to the whole. Let all associate, therefore, in this great human garden even as flowers grow and blend together side by side without discord or disagreement between them." We should explore the

traditional sources of support and connectedness - such as community, church, and extended family to encourage people to make "spirited connections". This will enable leaders and followers alike to gain personal insights into applying spiritual qualities such as justice, fortitude, and prudence to enhance personal fulfillment in their personal and professional activities. South Africa as one of the best multiracial democracies in the modern world, has a major role to play in demonstrating to the world how a very diverse population can live, work, and play together, and by doing so can lift the entire African continent to new heights of human interaction and work productivity. South Africa just like the United States is a human laboratory where we have been engaged in one of the greatest experiments in multiracial interaction in history. As the world continues to shrink into a township of increasing interdependence, where the quality of interaction will determine the quality of our lives, we must learn the lessons of unity, harmony, love and fellowship or we will perish. In the new millennium we should improve on our history of interracial unity, harmony, and cooperation. We need to educate a critical mass of people from all racial groups to accept the principle of the organic oneness of the human race.

The answers you get depend on the questions you ask. Sometimes we become so absorbed responding to a problem that we forget to ask what problem we are trying to solve.

DIVERSITY AND CONSISTENCY

Mr, Vice-Chancellor, sir, the changing workforce is one of the most extraordinary and significant challenges facing South African organisations today. Our society is changing quickly and the demographic changes within the South African workforce have the potential to affect many aspects of organisational management. Organizations that recognize that they need to fully develop all members of their workforce to remain competitive are responding by implementing a variety of different approaches to managing diversity.

How are companies responding to the changing shape of their workforce? Many have emphasized the need to manage diversity. Their newly diverse workforce should be, they maintain, as source of strength, not a weakness. Some issue statements saying that ‘Our diversity is an opportunity.’ They look for ways that diversity can be used for competitive advantage. These efforts are well-intended, but they don’t capture the full challenge. Why? Because in the face of accelerating international growth, companies have to do more than capture the benefits of workforce diversity. They also need its opposite: consistency. As workforce and bringing about needed consistency in the performance of key tasks, the delivery of products and services, and the ways employees all over the world can work together (Arrendondo, 1996; Wentling, 1992).

In brief, the challenge facing companies and organisations today is to forge consistency in a global workforce while also fostering diversity. It is a complex challenge and requires a delicate blending of opposing forces, yet it is of fundamental importance.

In the rest of this speech, I examine the concepts of diversity and consistency in companies. I explore the concepts separately, then together. I also provide some specific steps, supported by examples from leading firms, for capturing the benefits of both consistency and diversity in a global workforce. In closing I will draw the implications of my submissions on schools and colleges/universities in South Africa.

What do we mean by ‘Diversity’?

‘Diversity’ can refer to many things. When it comes to workforce management, it commonly has two meanings, one having to do with numerical composition, and one having to do with inclusive behaviour.

There are numerous ways in which diversity has been defined. Narrow definitions tend to reflect Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) law, and define diversity in terms

of race, gender, ethnicity, age, national origin, religion, and disability. Broad definitions, may include sexual/affectual orientation, values, personality characteristics, education, language, physical appearance, marital status, lifestyle, beliefs, and background characteristics such as geographic origin, tenure with the organisation, and economic status. Hayles (1996) for instance, defines diversity as “ All the ways in which we differ”. He adds that the diversity concept is not limited to what people traditionally think of it as race, gender, and disabilities.

Morrison (1992, 2000) categorized diversity in terms of four levels (1) diversity as racial sexual balance. (2) diversity as understanding other cultures, (3) diversity as culturally divergent values, and (4) diversity as broadly inclusive (cultural, subcultural and individual). Griggs (1995) classified diversity into primary and secondary dimensions. Primary dimensions of diversity are those human differences that are inborn and/or that exert an important impact on our early socialization and have an ongoing impact throughout our lives. The six primary dimensions include (1) age, (2) ethnicity, (3) gender, (4) physical abilities/qualities. (5) race, and (6) sexual/affectual orientation. Griggs (1995) also concluded that human beings cannot change these primary dimensions. They shape our basic self-image and have great influence on how we view the world. The secondary dimensions of diversity are those that can be changed and include, but are not limited to, educational background, geographic location, income, marital status, military experience, parental status, religious beliefs, and work experience.

Based on her workforce diversity research research, Tomervik identified the following four basic themes related to the definition of diversity: (1) the diversity concept includes a broad range of differences in the workplace, including age, disability, education levels, ethnicity, family structure, function, geographic location, race, religion, sexual orientation, style, and values - definitions are extremely broad and all-inclusive; (2) the meaningful aspects of diversity are how it affects the individual and the organization; (3) the broadened definition of diversity requires a culture change within

organizations such as in management styles, human resource systems, philosophies, and approaches; and

(4) there is an emphasis on communicating a concept of diversity as more than race, gender, Affirmative Action and equal employment opportunity. There is no one definitive definition that fully describes the broad range of differences diversity includes, the evolutionary nature of the process it represents, and the far-reaching impact it has on individuals and corporations (Wentling, 1992).

Diversity as numerical composition

Most frequently workforce diversity is thought of in terms of numerical composition. A 'diverse workforce' is one that reflects the many different kinds of people in the community or society, usually meaning people of different ethnic origins, men and women, educational experiences, professional backgrounds, and so forth. When a firm says it must increase its workforce diversity, it usually means hiring more women and black, or citizens of different countries, and promoting them more fully into all levels of the company. The emphasis is on numbers.

Why is diverse composition of the workforce important? One reason has to do with legal compliance. In some countries workforce diversity is mandated by law. Another reason is a sense of fairness - to many managers, it seems equitable and just to compose a workforce broadly. Much of the writing about diversity comes from the United States, where a diverse workforce commonly refers to racial and gender composition, and can also refer to age, sexual orientation, physical abilities, and religion. Many US firms make a deliberate effort to recruit and promote women and ethnic minorities. For example, the largest American automakers - Chrysler, Ford, and General Motors - present in their annual reports the gender and racial composition of their workforces, showing the change from one year to the next. These firms and others find it important to show that their workforce reflects the broad diversity of American society.

Diversity in numerical composition is also important for access to specific market segments. For example, many companies have learned to put women into positions that interface with female clients, and similarly many companies in the US hire African-Americans to reach the rapidly growing African-American community.

The emphasis is still on numerical composition, but more for instrumental reasons than legal compliance or a sense of fairness.

Diversity as inclusive behaviour

As Wentling and Palma-Rivas (2000) put it, Diversity means more than just numerical composition - it also has to do with behaviour. It suggests an attitude that respects individual differences, that values all employees, and that fosters an environment where all employees can succeed.

Why is it important to encourage and support diversity of behaviour? First, so that all employees feel part of the firm and empowered to develop themselves fully. Intel Corporation is one firm that has defined diversity in this way. Its statement, 'Workplace of Choice,' explains:

We strive to be a workplace of choice in which people of diverse backgrounds are valued, challenged, acknowledged, and rewarded, leading to increasingly higher levels of fulfillment and productivity.

A workplace that respects diverse behaviour may bring the best out of each individual. But the benefits don't stop there. The combination of people from different backgrounds and with different ideas can lead to better overall performance. Groups consisting of people with different world views and experiences can share ideas and perspectives, inspiring new solutions to problems. To some observer, the greatest benefit to diversity has to do with sharing ideas and increasing organisational effectiveness. According to this view, capturing the full benefit of diversity means creating a whole that is more than the sum of its parts.

Diversity in numerical composition and diversity in behaviour are of course related. It is hard to have one without the other. Diversity in composition is needed to achieve diversity in behaviour - it's hard to get breadth of experience and perspective if employees are overwhelmingly of the same race, gender, education, and professional background. At the same time, diversity in behaviour creates an inclusive work environment which can attract and retain a broad cross-section of employees, leading to diversity in numerical composition. Each reinforces the other. Not surprisingly, many companies naturally think of 'diversity' as a broad term that encompasses both numerical composition and information sharing. At Coopers & Lybrand, for example, gender diversity has been a major priority. Why the importance placed on women in partner positions? One executive put it this way: 'The face of our buyer is changing and they expect people who serve them to represent them. And real diversity brings more creative solutions to our clients. To Coopers & Lybrand, the benefits of diversity are clear: diversity in composition helps mirror the client base, and diversity in behaviour leads to improved decisions.

Managing Diversity

Many organisations are changing their cultures and beginning to apply more emphasis to valuing and managing diversity mainly because they have a greater understanding of the significant role that diversity will play in their future competitive and organisational success.

Others also agree that modern society is undergoing a historic transition from a predominately white society rooted in Western culture to a global society composed of diverse racial and ethnic groups. In addition, the rapid growth in the number of ethnic groups has been marked by an increasing diversity in terms of language differences, cultural beliefs, and other practices within these population groups. Managing diversity prescribes approaches that are philosophically broad enough to encompass all dimensions of diversity. Henderson (1994) relates managing diversity to the accomplishment of the organization's goals. For him, managing diversity also emphasizes the managerial skills

and policies needed to optimize and emphasize every employee's contribution to the organizational goals.

Leach, George, Jackson, and LaBella (1995) used the term working with diversity in place of managing diversity. They implied that working with diversity "calls forth the challenge to be curious, inquire, interact, reflect, and experiment. It requires individuals to be respectful, curious, patient, and willing to learn". These authors used the term working with diversity rather than managing diversity because they believed that the word managing may be perceived as having negative connotation such as controlling. However, managing diversity does not mean controlling or containing diversity, it means enabling every member of the workforce to perform to his or her full potential.

Carnevale and Stone ((1995) define valuing diversity as being responsive to a wide range of people unlike oneself, according to any number of distinctions: race, gender, class, native language, national origin, physical ability, age, sexual orientation, religion, professional experience, personal preferences, and work style. Carnevale and Stone (1995) also noted that valuing diversity involves treating others as they wish to be treated. Hayles (1996) further noted that "valuing diversity is wise for personal, social/demographic, legal and productivity/profitability reasons".

There are important fields that have shaped and continue shaping diversity. They have been pioneering organizations in valuing diversity. International business has been one of the pioneer field in valuing diversity. Diversity, in this case, has emerged as a need for survival and success. Multinational corporations are forced to develop and implement strategies that could lead them to capture and retain diverse customer bases not only nationally but also throughout the world. They are also required to recruit and retain a diverse workforce that mirrors its market.

Diplomacy has been another area that requires valuing diversity. Diplomatic-post employecs need not only be aware of diversity issues, but need to develop skills to face the challenge of dealing with other cultures. Religious organizations have also seen how important it is to value and manage diversity to adapt their messages to other cultural identities. They are probably the ones that “have been in the forefront of documenting, studying and learning to manage cultural differences”

Voluntary associations of individuals who serve overseas are also examples and pioneers in valuing diversity. Private groups concerned with health, peace, ecology, and other humanitarian objectives have also developed sophisticated training and resources to meet their needs of surviving and understanding other cultures. Similarly, disciplines such as anthropology, psychology, sociology, history, and linguistics have dealt with diversity. Diversity issues have also been the concern of those who teach philosophy and ethics. Individuals in social work and psychology have striven to understand differences between people. Educators and human resource development professionals have had to deal with different learning styles of immigrants and expatriates. Lately, Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity and Employment Equity (AA/EEO) are the regulations that encourage diversity in organizations (Washington, 1995).

Sports/athletic organizations is another group that has had the need to effectively manage diversity. Sports/athletic organizations include group dynamics, behavioral processes, social interaction, socialization, and subcultures. Sports have become more institutionalized, especially at the highest levels of amateur and professional athletic events, and have come to reflect the corporate/commodity model, which makes sports more like work than play (Wentling & Palma-Rivas, 2000).

Managing diversity initiatives are “efforts to create an environment that works naturally for the ‘total’ diversity mixture”, not just women and blacks. Finney examined the reasons four companies implemented diversity programs. She found that these companies did not implement their diversity programs because it was the social, legal, or “in” thing to do. They did it because it was the right to do for their company’s needs, circumstances, and philosophy.

Increased competition and the changing marketplace are convincing many business leader that diversity should be an essential part of their business strategy. Corporate leaders have decided to incorporate diversity for four business reasons: (1) to keep and gain market share, (2) to reduce costs (3) to increase productivity, and (4) to improve the quality of management in their organizations. Cox and Blake (1991) noted that companies that learn how to manage diversity acquire a competitive advantage over companies that do not know how to deal with diversity. They found that sound management of diversity positively affects cost savings, employee selection, creativity, problem solving, flexibility, marketing, and resource acquisition. Triandis et al reported that those companies that “manage diversity well are more likely to gain competitive advantages, attain increased productivity form available human resources, and reduce the ntergroup conflict cost (Wentling, 1992; Work, 1993).

Some managers believe that a diverse workforce can outperform a homogeneous one of comparable talent. Although, managing heterogeneity may be more difficult in the beginning than managing homogeneity, most organizations, communities, and countries do not have the option of working in a homogeneous environment. Therefore it is becoming necessary that individuals and organizations become aware of the many advantages associate with having a heterogeneous work environment.

Another advantage is that even though diverse groups may encounter more difficulties than homogeneous groups at the forming stage or may take more time to reach a decision, they are more likely to seek the full range of possible solutions to the problem than a homogeneous group. Altogether, people of different cultures bring a variety of perspectives and outlooks to a task; such diversity may add to the pool of resources available to a group. Diversity can increase the potential group productivity and the quality of ideas generated by the group concludes that higher performance of homogenous groups occurs both in quality and quantity.

For companies to have effective employee work groups/teams that support one another's efforts, they must get their employees to value, respect, and accommodate people who are different from themselves in terms of race, ethnicity, language, culture, religion, age, ability, status, sexual orientation, family structure, family structure, and so forth.

Loden and Rosener (1991) believe that embracing diversity will require organizations to invest time, effort, energy, and commitment, but it will result in significant long-term advantages. The most likely long-term advantages will include

- the full utilization of the organization's human capital.
- reduced interpersonal conflict among others as respect for diversity increases.
- enhanced work relationships based on mutual respect and increased employee knowledge of multicultural issues.
- a shared organizational vision and increased commitment among diverse employees at all organizational levels and across all functions.
- greater innovation and flexibility as others participate more fully in key decision-making and problem-solving groups.

■ improved productivity as more employee effort is directed at accomplishing tasks and less energy is spent in managing interpersonal conflicts and culture clash.

Barriers to managing diversity

A variety of barriers (e.g., stereotypes and prejudice, discrimination, harassment, difficulty balancing work and family; poor career planning and development; lack of organizational political savvy; unsupportive work environment; exclusion and isolation; qualifications and performance questioned), have kept blacks from advancing in organizations. Determining what concerns and barriers are the most critical to employees is an important part of moving forward and is one of the first steps in effective diversity efforts. Although the specific barriers to advancement vary from one organization to another.

Diversity in multinational firms

As Wentling and Palmas-Rivas (2000) summarised, diversity is important in all firms, but takes on particular importance in multinationals. As we saw above, having a diverse workforce is one thing; capturing the full benefits of diversity is something else. In fact, it is more imperative than ever for multinational firms to think clearly about the nature of diversity, and to take steps to make the most of diversity. For example, at Gillette, diversity among its top managers is a high priority. Gillette's president, Michael C. Hawley, explained: 'I don't think you can be a global company and say you have only Americans running it'. Two of Gillette's four executive vice presidents are Europeans. Its business in the former Soviet Union, to offer just one example, is headed by a French man, supported by an Egyptian controller, and Dutch sales director, and officers from South Africa, Pakistan and Nigeria.

Just as important for multinationals is diversity in behaviour. A first priority, critical to hiring and retaining employees, is creating an inclusive work environment. In rapidly growing markets, such as China and central and eastern Europe, competition for local talent is intense. Offering a higher salary is not enough - employees who are attracted by a high salary might one day leave for more money elsewhere. Providing opportunities for development and career advancement is a better bet to attract the best new talent. Firms that value and reward diversity will retain key employees, reducing costs associated with new hiring and training.

As Rosenzweig (1998) observed, diversity of behaviour is also vital to stimulate creativity and innovation. Because it brings together people of different experiences, perspective, and backgrounds, a diverse workforce has the potential to achieve higher performance than a homogenous workforce. Many multinationals recognize that the cultural diversity of their workforce is a major asset, bringing a wealth of viewpoints, traditions, and ways of solving problems. By leveraging diverse viewpoints and experiences, individuals can learn from each other and the company can increase effectiveness. One multinational that has thought explicitly about the benefits of diversity is the consulting firm, Cap Gemini. Its CEO, Geoff Unwin, noted: 'Diversity brings a lot to the company...When people think differently, it puts a different perspective on problems. We exploit that.'

What do we mean by 'Consistency'?

There are two elements of consistency: consistency of output, and consistency of behaviour. Consistency of output refers to the nature of goods and services provided to customers and stakeholders: quality, reliability, service delivery, and so forth. Achieving consistency in output is a basic requirement for any high performing firm.

How do companies achieve consistency in output? By emphasizing consistency in behaviour. By training employees in specific ways. By forging shared values and establishing common ways of communicating. By developing processes and practices that are used effectively through the organization, allowing employees to interact efficiently.

Consistency in multinationals

Forging consistency for any company is a challenge, but for multinationals, with operations spreads across the world, it is a monumental challenge. Take Heineken, the world's leading international beer. Heineken is brewed and bottled at more than 120 sites worldwide, from Singapore to Capetown to its largest brewery in Amsterdam. The quality of its beer has to be absolutely consistent, batch after batch, year after year, no matter the continent or culture. Brewery workers, scientists, technicians - Heineken's workforce has to do things the same way everywhere.

Consistency of output is also critical in multinational service firms. The customers at Accor's leading hotel brands, Sofitel and Novotel, are globally mobile. They expect the same level of service whether in France, in Brazil, or in Korea. Yet Sofitel and Novotel operate in more than 35 countries and on six continents. Other leading multinationals, like Andersen Consulting, J.P. Morgan, and SAP, all have multinational firms as their clients. Excellent service on a consistent basis is essential.

How do these far-flung multinationals bring about consistency of output? By focusing on consistency of behaviour. They all pay close attention to employee selection and place great emphasis on training Heineken brings key employees to Zoeterwoude for technical training. Accor also relies on careful selection and offer extensive training, both at its Academie Accor in France and on-site at thousands of hotels around the world. The

goal: to make sure that everywhere in the world, key tasks are performed in a similar manner.

Achieving consistency and diversity

Any company seeks the benefits of diversity while also bringing about consistency in output and behaviour. But for multinationals, with workforces increasingly dispersed around the world, the challenge is even greater. Greater geographic dispersion means a greater need to respect differences, to make use of divergent ideas, to attract and retain a wide variety of employees. At the same time, the broadly dispersed nature of the global workforce means that achieving consistency is more important than ever.

How well have multinationals adjusted to the new global workforce? The record so far is decidedly mixed. A few multinationals have expanded so quickly, and so dramatically,, that they haven't been able to forge coherence and consistency among employees around the world. The result is erratic product quality or customer service, and poor international communications for the lack of clear processes and shared ways of making decisions. But even more common are multinationals so concerned with maintaining consistency, especially as they contend with geographic complexity, that they overlook the need for diversity. They train local employees according to the established ways of doing things, but miss opportunities to use new ideas. They find it hard to attract outstanding talent into their organization - after all, why would a talented local manager want to join a company that doesn't foster diversity? In either event, these firms may design brilliant global strategies but cannot fully implement them since they have not developed a workforce capable of achieving high consistency while also benefiting from diversity.

Recommendations for diversity in companies

How can multinationals foster diversity in their global workforce while also forging consistency? There are no easy answers, but the experiences of several successful firms offer some practical guidelines:

Recognize that diversity and consistency are two sides of one coin

For starters, multinationals must recognize that diversity and consistency are both essential for high performance. The challenge is not to promote diversity alone, for that could suggest that ‘anything goes’ or that ‘all differences are good’, nor is it to insist upon rigid conformity of behaviour around the world, which negates the benefit of diversity. Rather, it is to identify the key elements of consistency needed to succeed, and to make the most diversity in other dimensions.

The place to begin is with a discussion of consistency. What, a company should ask, are the qualities of conduct and the elements of behaviour that we all should share? What should all members of our firm have in common? This exercise can help clarify where consistency is important and where it is not. The point is to identify the common spine that holds the organization together. Of course, what also becomes clear is that most of these qualities have little to do with many dimensions of diversity, including national origin, religion, gender, or race.

One company that has explicitly identified a set of basic behavioral norms is Nestle. The world’s largest food company, Nestle has 459 factories and 200000 employees spread over the world. Given this broad dispersion of activities, the firm takes several measures to forge consistency. It describes clearly the qualities of a ‘Nestle Manager.’ Applicable the world over. It articulates its principles of organization. It states explicitly the ‘Basics of the Nestle Culture,’ including a shared commitment to pragmatism, personal modesty, and product quality.

But Nestle is not concerned solely with forging consistency. As a vast and decentralized organization, whose products must conform to local tastes, and where innovation is essential, it must encourage local decision making. In formulating beverages, in devising advertising campaigns for confectionery products, and in countless other cases, employees have to take account of local conditions. The nature of Nestle's industry makes local initiative all the more important. Because food products are closely linked to local eating and social habits, they have to be tailored to each locale. Diversity is therefore an explicit policy.

Nestle makes an effort to integrate itself as much as possible into the cultures and traditions of the different countries where it operates. Nestles, therefore, accepts cultural and social diversity and does not discriminate on ethnic, religious, or any other basis.

For Nestle, the emphasis on consistency in some things while supporting diversity in others is not a contradiction, but a pragmatic way to bring about coherence on a core of values as well as creativity and responsiveness on a range of issues.

Allow greater importance for either diversity or consistency, depending on strategic imperative

Although diversity and consistency are both important, at any given one or the other may be, important. After all, firms are not monolithic. They are composed of many subsidiaries and business units, at different stages of evolution and facing different challenges. Depending on the circumstances, greater emphasis may be given to diversity or consistency.

Take initial entry to a new market. For many firms, the immediate priority is to forge consistency - that is, to make sure that local employees are trained on key tasks, that they comply with safety standards, and are able to deliver needed output. As we saw above, Heineken operates 120 breweries in 84 countries, some of which it owns fully, some owned partially, and others which it runs under license. The need for workforce consistency at Heineken is obvious. Nor surprisingly, when starting a new brewery the primary emphasis is on forging consistency. Sharing new ideas and making the most of diversity is less important, at the outset, than ensuring consistent output. AS an example, Heineken created a joint venture in Vietnam in 1991, and over the next 18 months hired more than 200 people, most of whom had never worked in a private company, much less a brewery. Heineken's single most important task was to train these new employees so that rigorous global quality standards would be met. Forging consistency took precedence.

Strategies for Managing Diversity in South Africa

We can go on and on. This speech Mr Vice-chancellor, sir, is to draw lessons from diversity. Understanding the historical assumptions made about employee diversity within the South African workplace is critical to understanding the ways in which institutions manage diversity today. Most South African institutions and managers continue to relate to employee diversity based on the following six traditional assumptions I adopted from Rosenzweig, (1998); Morrison and Vancouver (2000); Wentling and Palma-Rivas, 2000):

1. Otherness is a deficiency.
2. Diversity poses a threat to the organisation's effective functioning.
3. Expressed discomfort with a dominant group's values is oversensitivity.
4. Members of all diverse groups want to become and should be more like the dominant group.
5. Equal treatment means the same treatment.

6. Managing diversity requires changing the people, not the organisational culture.

Although, these assumptions have been challenged, they still remain implanted in many organisations. Loden and Rosener (1991) concluded that some organisations are changing their cultures in support of greater employee diversity.

During the last decade, many organizations have responded to the increase in diversity with programs designed to manage diversity in the workplace.

Examples of such programs include nontraditional work arrangements, such as flextime and home work stations; education and training programs intended to reduce stereotyping, increase cultural sensitivity, and develop skills for working in multicultural environments; career management programs designed to promote constructive feedback to employees, mentoring relationships, and access to informal networks; and new employee benefits.

Morrison (2000) grouped the diversity practices found in 16 exemplary organisations into four groups: (1) diversity, (2) accountability, (3) development, and (4) recruitment practices. Wheeler conducted a different study for the Conference Board. He surveyed and interviewed 69 diversity managers, consultants, and academicians and found seven innovative diversity initiatives. Those practices were (1) incorporation of diversity into mission statement, (2) diversity action plans, (3) accountability in business objectives, (4) employee involvement from all levels and functions, (5) career development and planning (6) community involvement and outreach, and (7) long-term initiatives directed at overall culture change.

Although there is a wide range of approaches and strategies for managing diversity, there is no single approach or strategy that can be recommended for all organizational situations. Even though, as observed by Wentling and Palma-Rivas, (2000) there is no method that contains all the necessary ingredients for success in managing diversity, several individuals have developed steps and/or procedures that can assist organisations in successfully managing diversity. Morrison cited five major steps involved in the process of putting diversity into action. The first step is to identify the diversity problems in the organisation by collecting relevant information. The second step is strengthening top management commitment by getting them involved in the diversity effort. The third step is to select practices that fit the organisation's needs and problems and develop a balanced diversity strategy. The fourth step is to measure the specific results of the diversity efforts. The final step is to establish a process that ensures ongoing successful diversity efforts. Similarly, Baytos stated six steps that are needed to start successful diversity activities. The first step is to establish a clear business rationale for the initiative. Other steps include seeking employee input; converting employee input into action steps; setting the timing, focus, and breadth of training; monitoring initiatives, and assessing results.

Louw (1995) identified five phases in the overall process of managing diversity: (1) needs analysis - answer the questions why, what, how, when, where, and who of the managing diversity strategy.; (2) diversity strategy design - develop goals, objectives, methods, dimensions, management actions, priorities, and resources of plan; (3) development - form specific interventions and initiatives related to diversity; (4) implementation - develop a plan that answers who, when, where, and how the diversity interventions and initiatives will be accomplished; and (5) maintenance - evaluate and monitor diversity efforts to ensure ongoing improvement. In addition, Louw identified the following eight principles required for managing diversity successfully: (1) use a holistic, integrated approach; (2) obtain top management commitment and accountability; (3) consciously work to integrate diversity values into the broader organisational values; (4)

integrate responsibility for diversity initiatives into other management functions and initiatives; (5) integrate diversity efforts with existing strategic objectives and programs; (6) expect resistance to change, and take steps to minimize it; (7) use a participative management approach; and (8) be instrumental or facilitative rather than charismatic or autocratic in leading diversity initiatives.

After discussing several case studies, Gottfredson (1992) offered the following nine diversity principles to enhance management practice: (1) develop individuals, not groups; (2) stress variance, not just average differences; (3) treat group differences as important, but not special; (4) tailor treatment to individuals, not groups; (5) find the common ground; (6) reexamine but maintain high standards using cultural audit - an in-depth analysis of the organisation to assess its cultural roots; (7) test assumptions and support claims; (8) solicit feedback; and (9) set high but realistic goals.

Similarly, Griggs (1995) identified four steps to meeting the challenge of managing people who are different from ourselves: (1) acknowledge the differences; (2) educate yourself about differences by reading, listening, and putting yourself in situations where the other group is dominant; (3) figure out how the person you are working with is like or not like what you have learned about the group of which he or she is a member; and (4) work to value and appreciate those differences. Further, Griggs stressed that once we gather as much cultural information as we can, then we must look at and analyze it to see if it is relevant to the individual with whom we are dealing.

Toward Multicultural Competence in School and College/University Training

This speech will be incomplete without mentioning about 'cultural competency in schools and universities'. Developing cultural competence poses a difficult, challenging,

and multidimensional task. The task proves difficult because it requires the concerted and committed effort of both faculty and students. The task proves challenging because it calls for examining and confronting one's own perceptions, biases, prejudices, and worldview. The task is multidimensional because it involves heightening personal awareness, expanding cultural knowledge, and honing teaching skills. Multicultural issues must be fully integrated into all aspects of training from pre-practicum skill development and academic course work to practicum and internship placement.

Strategies for Transforming courses in Schools, and Colleges/Universities

Raising awareness represents an important step toward achieving cultural competence and sensitivity in school and colleges' training. To begin this process, faculty can individually and collectively explore their own particular cultural heritages, biases, and perceptions to raise their awareness of multicultural issues and of themselves as cultural beings. Such consciousness raising may be accomplished via scheduled retreats, seminars, or in-service training. Attending and participating in conferences or convention programs or workshops on multicultural issues in teaching may also help bolster cultural awareness and knowledge. The wealth of available multicultural literature also makes self-study and reflection a viable alternative or ancillary means of increasing awareness and knowledge.

Various departments might also set aside time during regularly scheduled meetings or create a separate forum for reviewing existing curricula to determine how closely specific courses embody multiple perspectives. Curriculum reviews also prompt some thought about specific ways in which culture-specific content can be infused into various courses.

Syllabi, teaching methods, and course content and process can also be considered in terms of their efficacy in giving voice to diverse worldviews. Resources and experiences of faculty can be shared; speakers knowledgeable about diversity can be invited for colloquia; and teaching strategies can be exchanged. Engaging in such

activities helps to build awareness, knowledge, and skills in working with diversity issues and addressing them in the classroom.

As more institutions of higher education recognize the value of multicultural education, opportunities for faculty to develop multicultural competence and demonstrate it in the classroom will likely increase. Indeed, some colleges and universities already have begun to assist faculty to develop multicultural competency by offering them opportunities to participate in faculty development programs on diversity issues. This is not a historical white or a historical black (or disadvantage) institution issue. It is a South African issue. Mr. Vice Chancellor, Sir, it is a powerful moment to commit to working toward our common goal of multicultural competence in schools and colleges. This is the way to teach 21st century skills. Today, opportunity for all requires something new. If we take these steps, we will go a long way toward our goal of bringing opportunity to every community that our students are representing. To realize the full possibilities of the new world order, we must reach beyond our own constituency, borders, to shape the spirit of African renaissance and globalization. These are the central realities of our time. Change is both liberating and threatening. But there is no turning back. And our open, And our open, rainbow society stands to benefit more than any other - if we understand, and act on the new realities of interdependence. We must be at the center of every vital global network, as a good neighbor and partner. We cannot build our future without helping others to build theirs. There is only one direction for South Africa and Africa on education: We must go forward. A good education is the ladder of opportunity. It turns dreams into reality. We must encourage talented people to choose teaching and research as a career and keep them in the university. Education today is Africa's broadband to the future - a powerful conduit for achievement and success in the new millennium. Let us work together to ensure that all Black and White Africans have the educational opportunity for a bright future. Every one in our community counts.

Giving 'intellectual backbones' to courses taught in human sciences, with special reference to psychology.

As Seligman (1998, 2000) noted, how did psychology get painted into the corner of being a healing profession, of being almost exclusively about identifying what was wrong with individuals and remediating it? He further noted "psychology has three missions - (1) curing mental illness; (2) making the lives of all people stronger, happier, more productive, more fulfilling; (3) nurturing and identifying genius, nurturing and identifying high talent. Around 1945, psychology got derailed and deformed and two of those three missions were forgotten." (p. 8).

Psychology became a study of victimology and that treats human beings as "subject" and "object" and see them as passive foci. Stimuli gives responses or external reinforcements positive or negative or childhood impulses, ego, that push the human beings left, right and centre. Psychology is not supposed to be just for studying weakness and damage, it is also the study of virtue and strength. Psychological treatment is not just a quick fix for what is broken, it is also for nurturing what is best virtue within human beings. It is for normal behaviour not only abnormal habits, damaged drives, damaged childhoods and damaged brains (Seligman, 2000).

For psychology to be a positive social science of the 21st century it must amplify the strengths, courage, optimism, interpersonal skill, joy, hope, purpose, persistence, honesty, patience, perseverance, perspective rather than pathologizing with DSMs to repair their patients' weaknesses. African psychology should not be psychology of negativities like anxiety, disorder, and depression but a psychology of our lives and life styles in Africa, of African renaissance, of growth and virtues, of peaceful coexistence of all people of Africa - blacks and whites. Seligman (1998) further observes, that psychology has missed road with too much influences of the medical model of diagnosis, treatment and prognosis. It should "retrace its steps to its original roots of bettering, making more fulfilling and productive the lives of all people" (p.11).

We need to move psychology from egocentric to the philanthropic. Positive psychology should help Africa to move from conflict to consensus. Psychology is just not an appendix of medicine, its mission is much larger, if we have not misplaced our greater, more meaningful and original mandate - to make life better for all people rather than just the mental ill. I therefore appeal to all psychologists in African continent to take up this original mandate at the dawn of the new millennium.

Such a turnaround is likely to enhance a higher level value of conducting culturally sensitive research and teaching relevant topics with a strong universalistic stance in the curricula. Ideas from South African and other countries should have an impact on the U.S. psychology that we presently teach in South Africa. We need to teach our students psychology of the developing world or "majority world", psychology of African Renaissance, lives across cultures; the practice of clitoridectomy as a fact of life for some African young women; of malaria transmission; of AIDS/HIV infection in Africa, of wars in Rwanda, DRC, Somalia/Eritrea; the psychology of land-possession in Zimbabwe; shooting in Columbine and Soweto Highs; of marriage and bereavement in Africa, economic development in Botswana; soccer/sports in Nigeria, Brazil and England; of truth and reconciliation in South Africa etc (Akande, 1999).

In a more interconnected world, this diversity can be our greatest strength. Just look around this great auditorium. We have members from virtually every racial, ethnic and religious background. And we are stronger for it. But as we have seen, these differences all too often spark hatred and division, even at ivory towers. This is not the new world way, this is not the African Renaissance way. We must draw the line. We should promote racial reconciliation. We need to have lessons on "forgiveness at schools and colleges and indeed in everyday life in South Africa. Forgiveness is a virtue in that it is a disposition to "abort one's anger at persons one takes to have wronged one culpably, by seeing them in the benevolent terms provided by reasons characteristic of forgiving. A forgiving person is one who tends to be aware of anger-mitigating circumstances. A

forgiving person has a chronic concern to be in benevolent, harmonious relationships with others, the ability to take the viewpoint of sufferers and to detach him- or herself from the personal experience of having been harmed. Forgiveness is an element of spiritual intelligence.

In the best traditions of the new world order, Africans must determine to set things right. They should restore the vital centre, replace outdated ideologies with a new vision anchored in basic, enduring values: opportunity for all, responsibility from all, and a community of all Black and White Africans. We need to reinvent curricular, transforming it into a catalyst for new ideas that stress both opportunity and responsibility and give our students the tools to solve their own problems.

How do we ensure the biological/reproductive survivals of African peoples

In closing, my fellow Africans, we have crossed the bridge we built to the new millennium. Now, we must shape a 21st century African Renaissance of opportunity, peace, responsibility, and community. We must be, as we were in the beginning, the first continent - the cradle of civilization. Today, opportunity for all requires something new: All people living in our continent should be challenge. To our children and young adults, there is only one way to prevent AIDS and STDs 100 percent of the time. That is simply not to have sex! After that, the next best solution is to practice safer sex. Anyone who has sex is at risk. Every time you have sex, you put yourself at risk for catching a disease. Diseases caused by bacteria or parasites can be cured. Diseases caused by viruses cannot be cured. Only their symptoms can be treated. It's your life. It's up to you to decide how you will behave sexually. If you choose to be sexually active - USE CONDOMS ALWAYS!. Tonight, let us take our look long ahead - and set great goals for our continent, our nation, our great university.

Implications for Education

Racial problems are systemic and deep. In order to further enhance the spirit of diversity and introduce young leaders to the cycle of racial unity, interracial cooperation and harmony, I suggest that

- (1) the South African government should establish a compulsory 9-months Federal Youth Program for post-secondary school graduates in order to provide young adults with spirit of diversity, positive self-esteem, reconciliation/forgiveness, patriotism, team viability, leadership behaviour, team work, and peaceful coexistence among future leaders.
- (2) Library hours should be extended to Sundays. Most university students are restless during weekends as they have no place to study and manage their time.
- (3) There should be compulsory noncredit core course for all first year tertiary students to broaden their knowledge of sexuality, of spirit of forgiving, of the world especially Africa and all its people.
- (4) Merging of viable institutions of higher learning with non-viable tertiary institutions to improve academic standards.

As Bill Clinton, U.S. youngest President, once observed, “ all human beings, genetically, are 99.9 percent the same. So modern science affirms what ancient faith has always taught: The most important fact of life is our common humanity. THEREFORE, WE NEED TO DO MORE THAN TOLERATE DIVERSITY - WE MUST HONOUR IT AND CELEBRATE IT (Clinton, 1999).

We remain an academically sound university - PUCHE. I am brave and confident enough to assert that we rank in the top few in terms of the quality of education and excellent research we produce we provide. With the appropriate mix of quality and cost, POTCH can earn the “best value” university in South Africa. Our campus is improving physically, including the noticeable Telematic Building we are in and the river beach,

wildlife and other beautification efforts. As long as our dreams outweigh our memories. Potchefstroom University will be forever great and young. That is our destiny. And this is our moment.

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Mr. Vice Chancellor, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls in absentia, I thank you for your patience.

Thank you. God bless you and God bless Africa.

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